Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

October 27, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Committee
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
1026 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

Thank you for your leadership in the FY23 House Appropriations budget process. As you and your colleagues work to reconcile the differences between the Senate and House to develop a final FY23 funding bill, we urge the conferees to accede to the provision in the Senate bill, S. 4659, which provides $20 million for much needed funding to enable libraries and museums to undertake critical renovation, expansion, and construction projects.

Public libraries and museums remain a cornerstone of our communities and backbone of the nation's education system. Every American should have a library near them that provides the best in educational opportunities, workforce development, mental health resources, access to high-speed Wi-Fi and, of course, books. During the COVID-19 pandemic, our libraries stepped up to support students, and whole communities, in accessing our increasingly virtual world. Similarly, museums provide creative learning opportunities and allow people to explore history, culture, art and science, and fuel our economy by generating a revenue of $15.9 billion and providing more than 726,000 jobs to hardworking Americans.[1]

As a critical facet of America's infrastructure, we must address the dire need to improve the facilities that house beneficial resources for all ages. According to the American Library Association, the average library building is now more than 40 years old and libraries across the nation require approximately $32 billion for construction and renovation. [2] Additionally, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, museums had to close their doors and report average

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[1] American Alliance of Museums. (2018). Museums as Economic Engines. Retrieved from
https://www.aam-us.org/2018/01/19/museums-as-economic-engines/

[2] American Library Association. (2021). America's public libraries need billions of dollars for construction and renovation. Retrieved from https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/libfunding/fed/public%20library%20construction%20needs.pdf
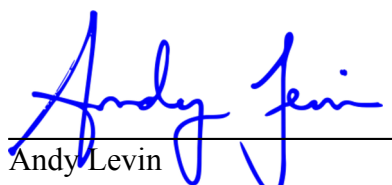
revenue losses of $791,000.[3] The requested funding will allow these facilities to make capital improvements without sacrificing funding they need to revamp other services post-pandemic.

We must reinstate federal support to address the growing need to update and maintain the infrastructure of these vital community assets. While this funding will put merely a dent in the need for robust capital improvements, libraries and museums must remain a funding priority to build a more equitable and just society for all.

Robust funding for critical infrastructure development projects will enable us to bring our libraries and museums into the 21st century and preserve these precious community resources for generations to come. As you finalize the appropriations process for FY23, we urge you to include $20 million for improving library and museum facilities in the final appropriations bill.

We thank you for your attention to this matter and look forward to working with you to craft a bill that invests in public libraries and museums: some of America's most cherished institutions.

Sincerely,

Andy Levin
Member of Congress

Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress

Nikema Williams
Member of Congress

Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

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[3] American Alliance of Museums. (2022). Museum Field Experiencing Compounding Financial Losses, New Survey Reveals. Retrieved from https://www.aam-us.org/2022/02/08/museum-field-experiencing-compounding-financial-losses-new-survey-reveals/#:~:text=In%202020%2C%2061%20percent%20of,an%20average%20of%2033%20percent.

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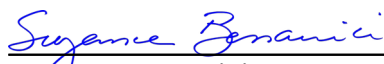
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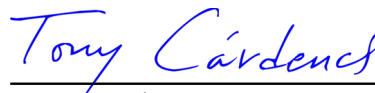Member of Congress

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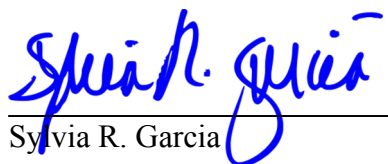Member of Congress

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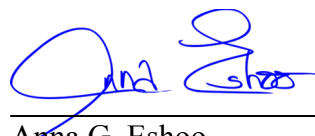Member of Congress

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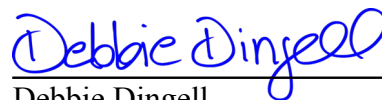
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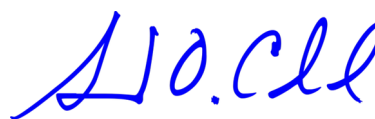Member of Congress

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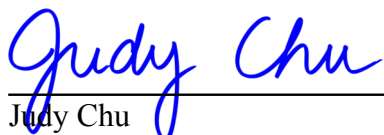Daniel T. Kildee
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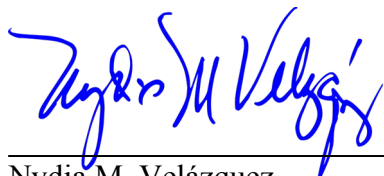Member of Congress

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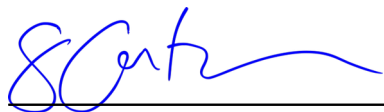
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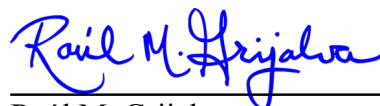Member of Congress

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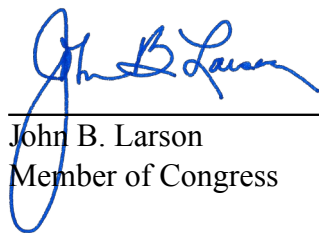Member of Congress

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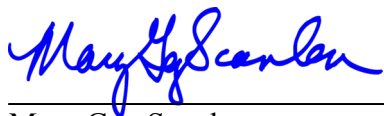
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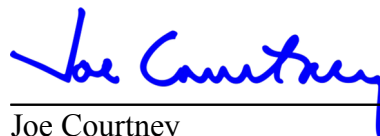Member of Congress

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